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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

Health Insurance Companies to be Billed for Childhood Vaccinations; *Vaccines for Children Program will Continue to Cover Uninsured/Underinsured Children*

Carson City – The Nevada State Health Division has announced that due to changes in federal funding, health insurance companies will begin to be billed for vaccines given to children covered by health care plans effective January 1, 2009.

Previously, a federal entitlement program provided vaccines for all Nevada children younger than 18. However, due to a dramatic increase in the number of federally recommended vaccinations, coupled with no growth in federal funding, the Health Division is no longer able to supply vaccines for children who have health insurance at no cost to providers.

Children who are uninsured, underinsured (have health insurance, but the policy does not cover vaccinations), eligible for Medicaid, American Indian or Alaska Native, will continue to receive free vaccine through the state's Vaccines For Children program.

The State Health Division has been working with private providers, health plans, and immunization coalitions to develop information for parents to help them prepare for the upcoming changes. Information has been sent to schools, clinics, hospitals, and businesses across the state. To access the fact sheets and other articles, visit <http://health.nv.gov> website.

The State Health Division is encouraging parents and caregivers to prepare for this change in policy by checking their private insurance policies to determine which vaccines are covered. Cost-sharing amounts to consumers will vary, depending upon their insurance plan.

"We regret being forced into the position we must take to protect the financial stability of the Vaccines for Children program, especially in light of the fact that vaccinating our children is extremely important," said Acting State Health Officer Mary Guinan, M.D., PhD.



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